

STATE OF ALASKA

COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

In the matter of the proceeding )  
pursuant to A.S. 22.30.011(a) in )  
relation to: )

VANESSA WHITE, )

Judge (retired) of the Superior Court,) **ACJC File No. 2019-002**  
THIRD Judicial District at )  
PALMER, Alaska )

**To: Honorable Vanessa White  
c/o Stacey Stone  
Holmes, Weddle & Barcott, PC  
701 West 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Anchorage, AK 99501**

**COMPLAINT**

The Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct pursuant to Article IV, sec. 10 of the Constitution of the State of Alaska, AS 22.30.011, and Rule 11 of the Rules of the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct charges that Judge Vanessa White engaged in the following conduct that violates AS 22.30.011(a)(3)(C), (D), and (E) and Canons 1, 2A and 3B(8) of the Alaska Code of Judicial Conduct.

- (1) On remand from the Alaska Supreme Court, Judge White held a status hearing in Schaeffer-Mathis v. Mathis 3PA-11-02658CI on January 29, 2018. At the conclusion of that hearing, the judge scheduled briefing with agreement of the

parties. The parties agreed an evidentiary hearing was not necessary and that Judge White could decide the remaining issue once briefing was completed. Briefing was completed and ready for decision on March 29, 2018. On that date the file was delivered to Judge White's chambers.

(2) On October 11, 2018 the Plaintiff filed a Request for Ruling, which stated that more than six months had elapsed since the date the matter was ready for ruling. That Request for Ruling was delivered to Judge White's chambers and was brought to her attention by her judicial assistant. However, Judge White did not read the Request for Ruling, review the file associated with the request, or make any effort to verify the assertion that six months had elapsed; but merely directed her judicial assistant to add it to the file. Judge White did not take any action in response to the Request for Ruling.

(3) On January 30, 2019 the Plaintiff filed a Second Request for Ruling in the matter. By this time the remanded issue had been pending for more than 10 months. This second request for ruling triggered action by the judge and the judge issued "Supplemental Findings and Conclusions Upon Remand" on February 7, 2019.

(4) From October 1, 2018 until the judge acted on the Second Request for Ruling, the judge signed approximately 7 pay affidavits stating that to the best of her knowledge and belief no matter currently referred to her for opinion or decision has been uncompleted or undecided for a period of more than six months.

(5) At no time did the judge take any action to report that her pay affidavits were inaccurate to the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct, the Clerk of Court, or any other administrative body; nor did the judge note the fact in the court file.

By signing pay affidavits that the judge should have known were not accurate, Judge White engaged in conduct that violates AS 22.30.011(a)(3)(C), (D), and (E) and Canons 1, 2A, 3B(8) of the Alaska Code of Judicial Conduct. The judge had notice first by her own briefing schedule, second by the delivery of the file to her office when the matter was ripe for decision, third by prompting from her judicial assistant, and fourth by the plaintiff's filing of the first Request for Ruling that action was likely required in the matter. The judge failed to dispose of this matter promptly and efficiently. By ignoring the Request for Ruling, either by mistake or by inattention, and by failing to acknowledge the inaccurate pay affidavits in a timely manner, the judge exhibited a disregard for the importance of prompt decision-making and her actions undermined the public's confidence in the integrity of the judiciary.

Commission Rule 11 (b) (4) (B) requires that a response be filed within twenty days.

Dated at Anchorage, Alaska this 12<sup>th</sup> day of December 2019.

ALASKA COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

By: Erin B. Marston  
Honorable Erin Marston  
Chairperson

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

**RETURN**

I served the above Complaint constituting a statement of formal charges on Judge Vanessa White, the person to whom it is addressed, on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of December 2019, by certified mail to her attorney Stacey Stone.



Signature

Administrative Assistant

Title

Aleta Bartimmo

Name